

HEADQUARTERS  
6511TH TEST GROUP (PARACHUTE) (ARDC)  
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE  
AUXILIARY LANDING FIELD  
EL CENTRO, CALIFORNIA



REPLY TO

ATTN OF: FTLGM

8 September 1960

SUBJECT: Loss of Valuable Film Coverage. FTL-225, Drop 1697-F-60

TO: ✓  
FTL  
FTLT  
FTLB  
FTLG

1. It is requested that the following information be brought to the attention of Commander Lasater, N.P.F.

a. During Drop Test No. 1697-F-60 conducted at TATU on 7 September 1960 from C-130 #134, the test subject, [redacted] of Headquarters ARDC became involved in a flat spin that grew progressively worse during his uncontrolled free-fall descent. Data reduction of Askania coverage established that [redacted] rate of spin was terminated at 180 RPM by activating his parachute 10 seconds prematurely. STATINTL

b. It has been determined by the Human Factors Division at WADD that a horizontal spin at 210 RPM will cause severe brain damage and/or death.

c. It was anticipated during preliminary planning of FTL-225 that the configuration of the test items might induce a flat spin, consequently, Contraves color film coverage was requested to determine (a) cause of spin, (b) rate of spin and (c) effect of spin on parachute reliability and related equipment.

d. Visual observation of the drop test by qualified observers, revealed that [redacted] safety had been compromised. It was decided to suspend further tests programmed under FTL-225 until the Contraves film coverage could be viewed by the 6511th Test Group test officer. Mr. Shoup from Range Control and Mr. Williams of Technical Facilities handcarried 260 feet of Contraves film to the photo laboratory with specific instructions to machine process the film. The instructions given to the photo laboratory by Mr. Williams and Mr. Shoup were completely disregarded and the entire roll of film was destroyed due to hand processing. STATINTL

2. I do not mean to be too captious but a test subject has risked his life that others may live and valuable test data is lost to posterity. It is now necessary to suspend further testing under FTL-225.

On file USAF release  
instructions apply.

3. Not only have 260 feet of valuable film been lost but also many valuable man-hours and time is a very important factor in this project.
4. I feel sure that a well-placed word from "top side" will insure that valuable technical data will not be lost in the future because of carelessness.

*C. O. Laine*

C. O. LAINE  
CWO, USAF  
Project Engineer  
Man-Carrying Section